

Thinkers keys

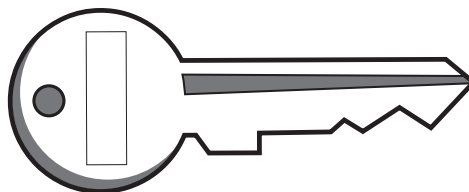
Purpose

A technique to foster innovative, creative and lateral thinking skills.

Process

- Study the table listing the 20 Thinkers keys tasks (see over).
- Apply appropriate Thinkers keys strategies to a particular unit, concept or theme.
- Participants choose, or are allocated, a key and may work individually or in teams to complete the thinking task.

Optional: Make large, laminated cardboard keys with the key title displayed on each (see template on page 42).



Product

The Thinkers keys provide a set of 20 different strategies, which can be applied to a concept, theme or topic, to assist learners to generate ideas and thinking.

For example, the alphabet key can be used as an *Evaluate* activity where students create a list of words or ideas from A to Z about a particular concept or topic to show what they have learnt.

References

Tony Ryan's Thinkers Keys. See www.thinkerskeys.com/cms/files/PDF's/Thinkers_Keys_all.pdf
Country Area Program, NSW Department of Education and Training.
See www.cap.nsw.edu.au/QI/TOOLS/stuv/thinkerskeys.htm

(Continued over)

Thinkers keys (cont)

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| <p>The Reverse</p> <p>Place words such as cannot, never and not in sentences which are commonly displayed in a listing format. For example, name 10 things which do not make a noise.</p> | <p>The Disadvantages</p> <p>Choose an object or a practice and list a number of its disadvantages. Then list some ways of correcting, or eliminating, these disadvantages.</p> | <p>The Combination</p> <p>List the attributes of two dissimilar objects, then combine the attributes into a single object.</p> | <p>The What If</p> <p>Ask virtually any what if question. They might be either serious or frivolous. One excellent means of displaying ideas from this key is to draw up an ideas wheel.</p> |
| <p>The Alphabet</p> <p>Choose an object, or general category of objects, and compile a list of words from A to Z which have some relevance to the object(s). Then try to expand on some ideas which link each of the words.</p> | <p>The Variation</p> <p>This key uses a special group of words. Start each question with 'How many ways can you ...'.</p> | <p>The Bar</p> <p>BAR is an acronym for Bigger, Add, Replace. This key can be applied to an existing object for the purpose of redesign.</p> | <p>The Picture</p> <p>Draw a simple diagram which has no relevance to the area of study. The participants then try to work out ways in which it might be linked with that area. Compile a list of things that the diagram might represent.</p> |
| <p>The Different Uses</p> <p>List some widely different uses for a chosen object from your area of study.</p> | <p>The Prediction</p> <p>Ask for a series of predictions regarding a particular situation, product or set of circumstances.</p> | <p>The Ridiculous</p> <p>Make a ridiculous statement that would be virtually impossible to implement and then attempt to substantiate it.</p> | <p>The Commonality</p> <p>Decide on two objects which would generally have nothing in common and outline some points of commonality between them.</p> |
| <p>The Question</p> <p>Start with the answer, and try to list five questions which can be linked to that answer only.</p> | <p>The Alternative</p> <p>List ways to complete a task without using normal tools or implements.</p> | <p>The Invention</p> <p>Develop an invention which could be constructed in an unusual manner. First outline the product on paper then move onto its possible construction.</p> | <p>The Brick Wall</p> <p>Make a statement which could not generally be questioned or disputed. Then try to break down the wall by outlining other ways of dealing with the situation.</p> |
| <p>The Construction</p> <p>Set up a wide variety of construction problem-solving tasks and use lots of readily available materials.</p> | <p>The Forced Relationship</p> <p>Develop a solution to a problem by employing a number of dissimilar objects. For Years 1/2 – one object For Years 3/4 – two objects For Years 5/6/7 – three objects For Years 8-12 – four objects</p> | <p>The Brainstorming</p> <p>State a problem which needs to be solved and brainstorm a list of solutions. Start the brainstorm statement with the words 'How to ...'.</p> | <p>The Interpretation</p> <p>Describe an unusual situation and then think of some different explanations for the existence of that situation.</p> |

Thinkers keys (cont)

PrimaryConnections examples

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| The Question: | The 5Es is the answer, list five questions which might be linked to this answer. |
| The Prediction: | How well do you think you will facilitate professional learning on the PrimaryConnections 5Es teaching and learning model? |
| The Ridiculous: | Everyone in our school will teach a PrimaryConnections curriculum unit perfectly the first time. |
| The Variation: | How many ways can we think of to implement PrimaryConnections in our school? |
| The What If: | What if we use literacy time to continue teaching PrimaryConnections? |
| The Alternative: | How could we view things closely without a microscope? |
| The Interpretation: | Unusual situation: No-one in our school wants to teach PrimaryConnections. |
| The Brainstorm: | How to manage the resources required for PrimaryConnections. |

Thinkers keys

